Professional Practice Placements – an opportunity for integration?

Authors: Victoria Silkstone and Jenny Silverthorne. Manchester Pharmacy School, The University of Manchester

Background: The GPhC's Standards for the initial training and education of pharmacists (2011) require MPharm degree courses to provide learning opportunities where relevant science is integrated with practice and where theory and practice are integrated. Harden (2000) describes 11 steps on a ladder of integration, from subject based to truly integrated teaching. At the top of the ladder is trans-disciplinary, where integration occurs in the minds of students, in the real life setting of clinical care.

Description of Work: Manchester Pharmacy School (MPS) have previously described their hospital practice placements (Hanning *et al*, 2002; Silverthorne *et al*, 2005) where students apply taught material to real-life practice scenarios in a series of structured tutorials in the clinical setting. MPS are currently developing a series of community pharmacy based practice placements to complement this experience. Together these professional practice placements are ideally placed to facilitate the integration of science and practice in the real life setting of clinical care, as described by Harden (2000). Therefore, the practice placements will become the 'pillars of integration' throughout the MPharm. Academic staff will work with practitioners to identify relevant learning opportunities relating to all academic modules in each practice placement and students will demonstrate their integrated learning through a series of real-life task-based coursework exercises.

Proposed Evaluation: We will review student coursework to assess whether students have met the intended learning outcomes as well as conducting student focus groups to seek the students view on the integrated practice placements. Furthermore, feedback from clinical tutors in the practice setting will be evaluated to identify if students are able to integrate the relevant pharmaceutical sciences to the practice of pharmacy.

References

1. General Pharmaceutical Council (2011). Future Pharmacists Standards for the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists.
2. Harden, R (2000). The integration ladder: a tool for curriculum planning and evaluation *Medical Education*; 34:551-557
3. Hanning, L; Price, G; Scanlan, J; Silverthorne, J; Cantrill, J *et al* (2002). A new approach to clinical pharmacy practice teaching in the four-year degree course. *Pharmaceutical Journal*; 269: 163-165.
4. Silverthorne, J; Mackellar, A; Thomas, S; Cantrill, J (2005). Problem-based learning in the fourth year of the MPharm at Manchester. *Pharmaceutical Journal*; 274: 117 - 120